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THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE A.A.L.

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VOLUME 53

OCTOBER
1960

NUMBER 10

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THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(*Section of the Library Association*)

EDITOR: D. HARRISON

Central Library, Manchester 2.

VOL. 53. NO. 10

OCTOBER, 1960

Another Supplement

Readers of the *Assistant Librarian* have by now become accustomed to the 16 or so pages which appear on richly tinted "old gold" paper each March and September. Succeeding editors of this Examination Supplement have given it an assured place in the lives of students, tutors and, we hope, examiners whose business it is, with varied ends in view, to understand such mysteries. Even the interested "layman" perhaps gives it a brisk perusal now and then. ("Layman" in this sense refers to the many F.L.A.s who could no longer pass F.P.E. if called upon to do so—thinks: "perhaps that's why they're abolishing it!"). Those, then, if any, with some faith in us will not when picking up the current issue and noting the different colour in the middle immediately assume that we were short of white paper, but will realise that another Supplement to the *Assistant Librarian* has arrived.

Readers of the A.A.L. *Primer of Non-Book Materials* by D. Mason, Librarian of I.C.I. Dyestuffs Division, will be familiar with the excellent chapters in that book on documentary reproduction. Most readers are also aware how quickly information on this subject becomes out-of-date, and Mr. Mason himself is, of course, more fully aware of this fact than most. After consultation with the A.A.L. Publications Committee, who have been considering this problem for some time, he has kindly agreed to write an annual supplement on developments in this field; the first of these will be found between pages 200 and 201, and we hope that it will prove the first of a series of considerable value to students and others.

"Why Librarianship?" the article by Kenneth Whittaker in the March *Assistant Librarian*, must have led many readers to the conclusion that most entrants to the profession arrive with us somewhat haphazardly and that those who are drawn in by carefully planned publicity are few. This is not altogether a bad thing, but there is definitely a need for publicity in the right places, and Jim Davey, Hon. Sales and Education Officer of the A.A.L., has given us a timely boost in a periodical known as *Date*. Mr. Davey features in an "I am looking for a job" series in an article entitled "How to become a librarian" which begins: "Bookworms beware! To be a librarian you need to like the borrowers as much as the books," says Mr. J. S. Davey . . ." Admirably angled to appeal to the lively and intelligent girls who, we trust, make up the readership of *Date* this interview with Mr. Davey is a step in the right direction and we can testify to one young lady already lured into the profession by this very article. We trust also that the handsome and rugged Mr. Davey, as depicted at the top of the column, is not over-embarrassed by fan mail of the wrong sort; after all the periodical is called *Date*!

Readers of the *Assistant Librarian* who have persevered with it for three years or more will remember the present editor's predecessor, W. G. Smith, who now edits *Books and Bookmen*, *Bookguide*, etc. Mr. Smith writes that he is anxious to get in touch with librarians interested in writing articles about recent books on particular subjects including "art, religion, food and wine, children's books, automobiles ancient and modern, music, theatre, hunting, shooting and fishing." Any librarian who want to earn a few guineas in this way should contact Mr. Smith at Books and Bookmen, 21 Lower Belgrave Street, S.W.1.

We quote from the article "Running a Staff Association" (August *Assistant*): "To a member with more than 15 years' service, special consideration is given by the *Execution Committee* at the appropriate time." (our italics). This, of course, should have read "Executive Committee" as several readers have pointed out with high glee. The authors of the article, to whom we apologise profusely, explain that people in the 15-year-and-over category "are usually dispatched by a firing squad in the Lower Stack during coffee break." Mr. A. Ll. Carver, Deputy City Librarian of Portsmouth and a former A.A.L. President writes:

"In many towns they wish you well,
And gift you as you go.
But here retirement's grisly knell
Brings in the headsman's blow."

Another correspondent writes simply: "I think this is a good idea and should be more widespread."

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AN OUTSIDE OPINION

by John Hoyle, Hon. Secretary, A.A.L.

Although the following may be seen as an account of the Malvern Weekend Conference,* its title derives from the first paper. I make no apology for this, because the first paper set the pace for a successful and fruitful weekend and, with the three papers which followed, it provided an excellent backcloth against which the policy of the Library Association on professional education may be judged.

The speaker at the first session was Mr. E. I. Baker (H.M.I., Ministry of Education). His subject was "The needs of the Service," and he opened by saying that his work concerned commercial education in which category of the Ministry's order of things librarianship had found a place!

Mr. Baker said that the number of sixth form pupils will increase during the Sixties to between one and a half and twice its present strength. University places would not be available for all those warranting that standard, and it would be an unwise move on the part of any profession at this stage to raise its pre-entry requirements to Graduate level. This would deprive that profession of the opportunity to take advantage of first-class material.

Certain developments in the trend of educationist thinking ought to be taken into account.

Firstly, the increasingly important role of the "sandwich course" was evident. This method, whereby a student is educated for half the time in college and half on the job, has produced extremely satisfactory results, the advantage lying in the opportunity to digest knowledge as it is acquired. Full time courses are at a disadvantage in this respect.

Secondly, the rate of failures arising from part-time day classes and, to a greater extent, from evening classes, is giving cause for concern. There is too much wastage, and research is going on in certain fields with the object of establishing common basic courses to be followed by new entrants. Diagnosed follow-up courses are then provided according to the needs and capabilities of the students as shown by their basic performance. Mr. Baker pointed out that all students in librarianship track along one course or none at all. Most librarians might never require it, but for Chiefs and senior members of library staffs some training in management and costing ought to be regarded as essential. At the other end of the scale, Mr. Baker thought that a basic training in psychology was every bit as necessary for the librarian as it was for the teacher. The Ministry of Education regarded librarians as a Third Force in Adult Education; whether Conference realised it or not, and whether they liked it or not, it was so.

Mr. Baker now came to his third point and, stressing the importance attached to liberal education, he quoted Ministry Circular 323. Before leaving his sixth form teacher, the sixth-former should have been introduced to teachers he need never leave, works of art and great literature.

Fourthly, the importance and value of in-service training and "sitting next to Nellie" was increasingly recognised in commercial apprentice schemes. It was being discovered that practical in-service training schemes were essential to efficient training.

*The 32nd Joint Annual Conference of the Birmingham and District, North Midland, North Western and Yorkshire Branches.

Lastly, the correspondence course was declining as a means of professional and industrial training. It still had value, especially for isolated individuals in inaccessible places—and then more for the bright student than the others. The system was at best a cumbersome substitute and lacked the stimulus which a good, live tutor can provide.

The application to librarianship of all this, Mr. Baker thought, was:

- (a) Library examinations neglect liberal and management studies.
- (b) There is no planned training of non-professional staff, because the profession pretends that all new assistants are intending librarians.
- (c) There is no provision for standard in-service training.
- (d) The correspondence course is too prominent.

Mr. Baker also suggested that there was too much note-taking in schools and classes. The material went in at the ear and out through the hand. A single year course at each stage is inadequate. In-service training should be insisted upon; graduates at the library schools are handicapped compared with their colleagues and are not always the best material to begin with.

Professional librarians should receive a period of training in one of the better and progressive systems. Industry does much better in this respect. If sixty per cent of staffs are to be considered non-professional, some thought should be given to their post-entry educational requirements.

The speaker at the next session was Mr. J. C. Harrison, Senior Lecturer at Manchester School of Librarianship. His subject was "The Schools: what has, what is and what should be done." Mr. Harrison is a well known figure and was about to depart from the British library scene for the U.S.A. He had also just returned from Ghana and one thing in particular which appeared to impress him during his visit to Africa was that already, after only three years of independence, Ghanians assume from the outset that a library must be in the charge of a qualified librarian.

Some of the points made by Mr. Baker were underlined by Mr. Harrison, including the vicissitudes of the note-taking method. In particular he stressed that it was still not proposed that anything should be done about training librarians in management and the handling of staff, although more than half the income of libraries in the public sphere was devoted to staff and the proportion would undoubtedly rise.

Summarising what has been and what is being done, Mr. Harrison reminded his audience that when the schools were established in 1946, they had no guidance as regards a syllabus. The single pre-war establishment at the University of London made no impact on the profession and, unfortunately, its Director was killed during hostilities. Since the schools have been established, about 4,300 full-time students have attended and 3,000 or sixty per cent of all Chartered Librarians are products of the full-time schools. The thirty-six full-time teachers are a major force among those in the profession who contribute to research in the national and international field of librarianship. It could be said with conviction that the schools had had a beneficial effect.

In the future, it must be recognised and accepted that division of staff is necessary. We must aim at a situation whereby the trainee and professional librarian will have undergone a period of full-time professional education. We must aim eventually to convert the whole professional intake to university graduates. In-service training should be organised and professional education should be achieved by a post-graduate course. Three or four Schools of Library Training should be

developed with Ministerial supervision and support. A two-year course should be instituted and a fair proportion of in-service training carried out as part of it.

Mr. J. P. Wells, City Librarian of Oxford, dealt with "The role of in-service training."

It was a fact to be deplored that there were very few training schemes in existence. The majority of students do not receive the opportunity of full-time professional education and, although it was assumed that in-service training took place, it was seldom organised and systematic.

Inadequate staffing was the chief problem in most places, but the availability of a systematic scheme or plan is one of the most important considerations in recruiting and retaining staff. The time-honoured staff manual method of training still had its uses but we must realise that its hey-day was twenty to thirty years ago. Improvement along modern lines can be brought about by a modest increase in staffing of five per cent or less.

The essential basis for any modern scheme was proper division of work. It is possible to reduce the professional staff employed at particular service points and to devote more of their time to training. Assistants can be recruited as library clerks with less than five G.C.E. passes. Trainee librarians could devote themselves to professional training, either part-time or at full-time schools, and to service training. Apart from taking part in an organised in-service training scheme, professional staff should be encouraged to acquire training in practical book knowledge and the opportunity to do this lay in such apparently routine tasks as the straightening and revision of shelves, binding routine, etc.

The most difficult task fell to Miss L. V. Paulin, County Librarian of Hertfordshire. Miss Paulin is Chairman of the Education Sub-Committee of the L.A. Register and Examinations Executive Committee, and the title of her paper was "What the Library Association is doing."

Publication of the new Examination Syllabus had been unexpectedly withheld and Miss Paulin faced the problem of discussing the policies and difficulties of her Committee short of revealing their recent decisions. Her interesting good-humoured account of the pattern of events leading to the present position, and the skill with which she steered her paper between the Charybdis of platitudes and the Scylla of indiscretion earned for her the ovation of the whole weekend.

NOTICE OF ELECTION

Nominations are invited for the following Officers and Councillors to serve during 1961:—

Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Editor.

Nine National Councillors, at least three of whom must be under 30 years of age on 1st January, 1961.

By resolution of Council, the special provision on the ballot papers hitherto provided for National Councillors under 30 years of age will be withdrawn. The three candidates under 30 years of age polling the highest number of votes will be declared elected. The remaining successful candidates will be the six others polling the highest number of votes irrespective of age.

Nomination must be submitted to me in writing by two or more members of the Association, countersigned by the nominee and accompanied by suitable biographical details, (i.e. present and previous Authorities, work for L.A., A.A.L., Nalgo etc. and the candidate's age as at 1st January, 1961). The last day for receipt of nominations is 15th October, 1960.

JOHN HOYLE, Honorary Secretary, 45 Camphill Road, Woolton, Liverpool.

SOME ASPECTS OF PRACTICAL BOOK SELECTION

1. Stock control in a county system

by Peter Labdon, Hertfordshire County Library

Some interest in the methods of stock control employed by different types of library authority was expressed in the June issue of the *Assistant Librarian* and an account of a system developed in Hertfordshire may therefore be of value.

The county library serves a population of about 650,000 in an area wholly urbanised in the south (the London fringe) and mainly rural elsewhere except for pockets of intensive development centred mainly on four New Towns three in a line along the Great North Road and one in West Herts. The library service is decentralised and is administered through a mixture of regions (3), areas (3), independent branches, mobile libraries (5 rural and 2 urban), village centres (6 only) and services to special groups. The total number of service points is 577. There is a large and flourishing County Technical library service which acts in close concert with the public library service. Headquarters maintains only a mobile library and a students' section as direct book services; otherwise it is wholly distributive—in a wholesale sense—and administrative.

The selection of bookstock for adults devolves upon the branch and regional librarians who use as suppliers either a local bookshop where one is available or a library wholesale firm. The acceptance of the principle of decentralised book purchase immediately postulates the existence of a central control and this is provided by a headquarters department through which all book orders are passed. In practice there is little editing of book orders at this stage. So far the administration of the work follows the usual pattern in counties which have accepted the principle of decentralisation.

A system has been evolved at regional level, however, which is designed to mitigate as far as possible the inherent evil in local book-purchase—that is, over-standardisation of bookstocks. The scheme involves the appointment of a librarian immediately below the regional librarian but above the branch librarians in seniority as, for want of a better term, stock editor. As regions are constituted in Hertfordshire this involves control of a stock of about 100,000 books in use in numerous full and part-time branches, mobile libraries and special service points. It has been found that in practice a fairly close supervision of the whole bookstock can be maintained and a greater degree of co-ordination and flexibility achieved. In effect, the acquisition and disposal of the bookstock of the region is in the hands of one person who is relieved of much of the responsibility for general administration which bedevils book selection if left in the direct care of the chief librarian, whilst at the same time giving a close degree of synchronisation of effort throughout the region, and by co-operation between regions, the County Technical library service and areas throughout the county as a whole. In addition, co-operative book purchase schemes inside the system can be attempted, the bookstock as a whole can be made more flexible and, generally, a higher standard of purchase results. The physical condition of the stock improves, a more balanced coverage of subjects is attained and librarian-reader relationships take an upward turn.

It can be argued that none of this is revolutionary and in the main this is true. But in terms of practical application the scheme is a departure from established practice in county libraries, so far as we in Hertfordshire know. We have attempted to solve the librarian/administrator, librarian/bookman issue by practical means and so far as our experience goes it would seem that it is of no great significance which leaning a librarian has so long as he is required to apply his abilities in only one direction at a time. This evolution of organisation has been dictated by purely local conditions; many libraries achieve the same effect with very different methods, no doubt. However, this is what has happened in Hertfordshire and librarians who feel that more information may be of use to them are welcome to draw upon our experience either by visit or by letter.

2. *Two urban systems compared*

by Mary M. Hubble, Oxford City Libraries

Having read Mr. Hugh P. Stark's letter in the June *Assistant*, I am encouraged to give an unofficial, but I hope accurate, outline of the methods of book selection in the two systems for which I have worked. These are the Nottingham Public and the Oxford City Libraries.

Both systems can be said to have an adequate book fund, so the selection of new books and the making of replacements are not inhibited to a great extent by lack of money.

As far as new books are concerned, Nottingham has an agreement with local booksellers whereby single copies of newly published books and of fiction re-prints are sent on approval to the Central Library. Once a week, the Chief Librarian and all heads of departments, including Branch Librarians, meet together to examine and discuss these books and make selection according to their assessment of the needs of their own department. Comment is always invited, and specialist knowledge tapped. Although the reading of reviews is part of the job of every selector, the final decision to have or have not rarely depends entirely on a national reviewer's opinion. If the merit of a certain book is in dispute, members of the staff are asked to read it and give a personal assessment. If a book is unsuitable for public library use in its present format, the home bindery can often make remedies.

Certain heads of departments examine the cumulative *Bookseller* for new editions and reprints of standard works, and draw the attention of the others to them.

Readers' requests for books not already in stock are announced, and the Chief Librarian decides whether to buy outright, see on approval, or request from a co-operative lending scheme.

Worn out books are replaced with new copies or new editions of the same work where the head of department considers it necessary, but personal visits to bookshops are encouraged, so that subject revision can be practiced with the newest available books in mind. No non-fiction book is withdrawn without being considered for permanent store within the system, and last copies of out-of-print fiction are stored to satisfy the occasional request.

At Oxford, the Deputy Librarian visits the local bookshops personally every week and chooses newly published books. Heads of departments subsequently make a selection from these; their choice is observed by the

Chief Librarian and his Deputy who sometimes make amendments. Fiction reprints are not seen but the Holt Jackson and Woolston lists are available for ordering replacements.

Readers' requests for books not in stock are made in writing at the counter, and a reference to a review is required from the reader if the book is recently published. The decision to purchase or not, particularly in the case of new novels, rests largely on a good or bad review in a respected newspaper or magazine. Regular use is made of the Regional Library Bureau.

All worn-out non-fiction is carefully checked in publisher's catalogues and considered for replacement, permanent store, or discard, but only out-of-print fiction of a classical or semi-classical nature is preserved permanently.

Where as in Nottingham it is quite possible for stocks of the bigger branches to supplement the stock of Central, and for Central to draw upon the branches to satisfy requests, in Oxford this is not possible, as branches can only order new books which Central has already selected, and subject replacements are limited to titles already in Central's stock.

Personally I consider that the more people in a system who are involved in the job of book selection the better. Whatever the merits of experienced personal selection for a particular system may be, one or two people (however good they are) cannot be expected to have the time or the encyclopaedic knowledge necessary to maintain a well-balanced stock.

Other Correspondence

The Syllabus

May I be permitted to express one or two opinions upon the change of syllabus which it is proposed to introduce in 1963.

Although I think that all members of the profession will welcome any attempt to raise the status of librarianship, the recent announcements in the professional press must have caused many of us to pause for thought. I feel that it may safely be stated that the end of part-time study is now in sight. An admirable reform, one imagines, but what of the questions this raises? Firstly, are there enough library schools to cope with the task of preparing all the candidates who wish to take the Registration Examination? At the moment the answer must, I feel, be very decidedly in the negative. Secondly, have we any real hope for the "adequate grants" mentioned by Mr. Davey in the August *Assistant Librarian*? If we have, then I apologise to him in advance, but it may well be that authorities which will cheerfully support medical and dental students at college for 5 years or more, may take a somewhat harsher view of the importance of maintaining library students for a two-year term. Thirdly, what of the student who is foolish (or unfortunate) enough to marry before passing the Registration Examination (1963 style)? He would now appear to be doomed forever (unless he possesses a private income) to remain unqualified. Why should this be so, especially in view of the fact that there is a shortage (I am told) of professionally qualified librarians? Surely the new syllabus is likely to aggravate that shortage?

One other point should be mentioned concerning the new proposals.

The majority of qualified librarians can look forward to a Grade I post (I speak now of those employed in Public Libraries). Grade I now carries the salary of £815 per annum at its maximum. Are we really naïve enough to imagine that the cream of our youth (academically speaking), or those with good degrees are going to leap at the chance of entering a profession with such a low *average* salary per qualified person? I do not deny that much higher salaries can and are often earned, but I would point out that the higher the standard of entry to a profession, the harder it is to reach the top. With the new higher standards of entry we are going into open competition with Medicine, Dentistry, and Teaching (among a host of other professions) for our recruits. Indeed we are refusing any other type of recruit! Can we offer our school or university leaver as much as these other vocations (in the way of cash, which in spite of some of our high-minded ideals, does remain one of the principal reasons why a man leaves his comfortable bed in the morning to toil during the day)? The answer once again, must I fear, be in the negative. Finally, may I point out that experience shows us that the increasing difficulty of examinations is in no way accompanied by an increasing willingness of employers to heighten the rewards of our labours!

B. E. BISHOP, *East Sussex County Library.*

Division of Staff

I should like to express my complete agreement with Mr. Hepworth's views on counter duty (*Assistant Librarian*, August) and to tell him that one library at least, has put these theories into practice.

I am Readers' Adviser in a library where the staff is divided into professional and non-professional. The counter is situated in the entrance hall, and is staffed by girls recruited from the local secondary schools.

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They have proved themselves, despite their youth, perfectly able to deal easily, but firmly with the public, and to do all the clerical work—overdues, tickets, repairs, etc.—usually delegated to junior assistants.

The focal point of the library is the Enquiries' Desk, which is staffed full time. The real work of librarianship is centred here—registration of readers, introduction to the library, reservations, suggestions, inter-library loans and all enquiries.

The greatest merit of this division of staff is that it works! I look forward to the day when librarians will cling less tenaciously to their counters.

ANGELA DUCKER, *Penge Public Library*.

More Testimonials

Mr. P. D. Gann drew attention, in the January 1960 issue of the *Assistant Librarian* to the unsolicited testimonials to library services appearing in authors' prefaces, and Mr. A. G. Pepper quoted another from the text of a book. I would like to draw attention to one which I think is as good as it could be, and holding, as I do, a high opinion of the author's sincerity I have no doubt that he means exactly what he says.

The author is Neil Bell. On page 238 of *My writing life* (Alvin Redman, 1955) appears the following:

"But there is a profession to whose members I owe so much that it would be churlish and ungrateful not to mention my great debt to them. They are the many public librarians to whom I have applied in person or by letter over and over and over again for help in writing my books. That help is unfailing. There is no trouble they will not take. I do not think the public generally, and young writers particularly, have any idea of the wealth of information that is theirs for the asking in our public libraries. There are at least half-a-dozen names that should accompany mine, as collaborators, on my title pages. Here are three: the late James Ross; W. S. Haugh; the late Frederick Cowles."

Edward Vale dedicated his book *How to see England* (Methuen, 1937) to Tom Gray, of Tullie House, Carlisle.

"In the matter of thanks I am indebted to so many librarians and museum curators, but to you most of all. Perhaps I should not have made so many journeys to Tullie House if you had not been so gifted and so lenient."

I agree with Mr. Gann: we ought to make more use of these testimonials. They are not given without reason.

F. H. FENTON, *Tottenham Public Libraries*.

An Experiment in Time

Students of library co-operation might like to add the following anecdote to their files. On 24th June, in order to satisfy a request from a library in this country, we wrote to the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, with the object of acquiring a photo-copy of a particular paper given at one of their Conferences. A reply dated 18th July stated that papers were not available separately, but that we could purchase a copy of the full Proceedings if we cared to submit an order enclosing remittance.

We wrote again, by airmail, pointing out that we were interested in the one paper only, and repeating our request for a photo-copy.

On 30th July came the answer. Facilities for photo-copying were not available, but it was possible that the Engineering Library in the same

building might be able to help. We were asked to write to them at the same address. Anxious to preserve the last remnants of our sanity, we passed the matter over to the requesting library, who have our sympathy.

ALAN DEARDEN, *Hove Public Libraries.*

JIM PICA

Jim Pica had a *stem* (or *shank*)
As handsome as his *face*.
A newly-minted Centaur m,
He lay there, just in *case*.

A bright young u from just next door,
At Jim made quite a *set*,
But while he could admire her *points*
He kept his *feet* as yet.

One day when they were both *composed*,
He stood there at her side.
He realised she was his *type*,
And he was *justified*.

She shivered as his manly *beard*,
Brushed up against her *shoulder*,
And thought they'd need some *furniture*
Before they were much older.

Jim saw the Reverend Ampersand,
And he put up the banns,
They found a well-known *character*
To be best man—Gill Sans.

Then, married in the best of *forme*,
They from the church were *lead*,
And settled in their *carriage*
And then *chased* home to *bed*.

They were an *Old Style* couple
And knew that they would want
At least a dozen *minuscules*—
You'll see them by the *fount*.

Their wishes all were granted,
And since it seemed long odds,
It caused a big *impression*
When their first offspring were *quads*.

Over ways of *reproduction*,
We'll draw a half-tone *screen*,
So here we take our parting
From this quite idyllic scene.

And though we have no *proof* of this,
We gather from reports,
That though they've sometimes little *quoins*,
They're never *out of sorts*.

ALLAN LEACH (after Thomas Hood).

"Jim Pica" originally appeared some years ago in *Loughborough Log*.

THE AMERIKA GEDENKBIBLIOTHEK, BERLIN

by Samuel T. Lucas,
Hull Public Libraries

Berlin is an island. The Four-Power city is isolated over a hundred miles behind the Iron Curtain in the German Democratic Republic. It is a fascinating place to visit because nowhere can one see Eastern and Western ideas and practice in such keen competition in such a compact area. Berlin is rich in attractions for the sightseer and tourist: its lakes and Grunewald; in the East the Marx-Engels Platz, overhung with giant pictures of Soviet and East German Communist leaders; Trepstow Park with its towering memorial to Russian troops who fell in the battle for Berlin; Stalin Allee, the most complete reconstructed thoroughfare in Berlin lined with pale tile-faced buildings. The Western sectors boast the Kurfurstendamm, a dazzling street of fine shops, restaurants and cabaret clubs, a wonderful view from the restaurant 465 ft. above Berlin on the Funkturm and, where one would least expect to find it, an English garden in the Tiergarten by the once famous Unter den Linden.

The American Memorial Library is situated on the south side of the Blücherplatz facing the Soviet sector and less than half a mile from the border. It functions as Berlin's Central Public Library. Although Germany has a long history and tradition of learned libraries and "Association" public libraries, the idea of a free open-access public library is fairly new. The Memorial Library is however a fine example of all that a modern public library should be. Its foundation is due to the United States, whose initial grant formed this gift to the people of Berlin in recognition of their courage during the Berlin Air-Lift.

Details of the administration and organization of the library have been given by the Chief Librarian and other experts in the professional press of this country and abroad* so this brief article is confined to impressions. The building is an impressive modern six-storied one of concrete with large areas of glass and a facade of squares of grey slate in contrast with concrete and windows of the same size.

Abreast of the most modern trends, charging, return and registration desks are in a separate department leading immediately from the spacious entrance hall, on one wall of which the following quotation is inscribed in German:

"This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow truth, wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left to combat it"—Thomas Jefferson (1743—1826)
Writing of the University of Virginia.

Charging is effected by the Wayne County system with punched card variations. Staff is divided between professionals and non-professionals. Student Librarians do not usually work full-time in libraries in Germany until they have qualified at Library School and become Diplom-Bibliothekars, equal to our Chartered Librarians.

The library is subject divided and includes a Popular Department, General Reference and Information Department, Humanities Department, Department of Science and Technology and Fine Arts and Music Depart-

ments as well as Children's Department, Processing Departments, etc.

It has its own classification scheme with 25 main classes but unlike most British central leading libraries the General Lending Library displays its non-fiction stock in broad "interest-groups," rather than in a closely classified sequence. The "interest-group" idea is after that of Miss Ruth Rutzen of Detroit Public Libraries and designed to make non-fiction more attractive to casual readers. This plan has been followed in branch libraries in this country but seems to function quite well in the larger collection of this department, too.

In the true tradition of public libraries the Gedenkbibliothek is freely available to all Berliners and is used by East Berliners as well as West, though by the former as a reference library rather than as a lending library. The lasting impression of the library is that it could be an effective Central Library in an integrated public library system for all Berlin, as the capital of a reunited Germany. Perhaps only a librarian would find time to visit the Gedenkbibliothek on a short visit to Berlin but it certainly is worth while.

*Some articles on the Amerika-Gedenkbibliothek.

- ERNESTUS, Horst. The American Memorial Library. L.A.R. June, 1957. pp. 187-196.
MOSER, Fritz. Die Amerika-Gedenkbibliothek als Idee Erfahrung. Bucherie und Bildung, 1956 Heft 5 pp. 141-52 (contains 8 pages of photographs).
GRAY, GEORGE. America's gift to Berlin. Library World, 1956, Vol. 58, pp. 87-89.
KLUTH, Rolf. Die Amerika-Gedenkbibliothek, Berlin: Wessen und Wirkung. Kulturarbeit. 1956 Heft 2, pp. 38-40.

Review

MILLS, J., A Modern Outline of Library Classification. Chapman and Hall, 1960, 36/-.

For many years, practising tutors have awaited a successor to Phillips' Primer or for a completely revised edition, so that students might approach the subject in a less stereotyped manner and the red rags, yellow rags, dirty rags so often quoted finally immersed in a modern washing machine to emerge in a fresh light. It is unfortunate, therefore, that the newly published *Outline* by J. Mills should fall short of requirements both in content, physical appearance, and price.

The book should prove adequate for those wishing to digest quickly the essentials of the main bibliographical schemes, but a more critical outlook might have been adopted in the conclusions enumerated. Particularly interesting are the first six chapters, where most of the old and well established principles are re-stated and an attempt made to give at least a Ranganathan slant; it should be remembered that the Library Association has so far excluded the Colon Scheme from the Syllabus, although no doubt room will be found for it as and when the final details of the new one are thrashed out. In his examination of the schemes, Mr. Mills has given almost equal allocations to Dewey, U.D.C., Library of Congress, Brown, Colon and Bliss, and in addition to enumerating patiently the main features, has supplied plenty of examples. The chapter on Bliss is one of the best summaries of the scheme I have encountered, and that on special classifications enumerates bare essentials of value to students.

A useful approach to practical classification is outlined in Chapter

14, which should be compared with Merrill and similar sections in Phillips and Sayers.

It is, perhaps, unfair to criticize the literary style of a book so obviously based on lectures, but the pedantic minded will certainly find irritating the continued use of such abbreviations as "E.G." in commencing sentences and the similar use of conjunctions such as "but" and "and." Librarians in their writings should attempt to set a high standard, and Mr. Mills could surely have taken the trouble to re-examine his lecture notes so that his sentence construction, which might be acceptable in speaking, was carefully revised before appearing in print. The modern generation has become used to the splitting of infinitives but the purist will still shudder at such phrases as "in the need to carefully arrange" and "to more effectively run library services," too many examples of which appear in this book.

The book is a poor advertisement for varityping; the student burning the midnight oil will find it particularly trying on the eyes and if many other volumes of this length are so produced I can visualize the oculists and opticians rubbing their hands as we rub our eyes. Why was such a type used? To keep down costs? It would appear not, for 36/- for so slender a volume is high even in these days, and individual students not subsidized in the purchase of books will still be more than tempted and would be advised to lay out 8/- on the old and oft reprinted Phillips. As a profession, we should surely do all we can to encourage good, attractive and reasonably priced book production, and this particular volume will certainly not enhance any reputations.

C. W. TAYLOR.

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